

Message Text

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LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESSEL

E.O. 11652: XGDS3

TAGS: PFOR US NO OVIP (KISSINGER, DR. HENRY A.)

SUBJ: CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING: ASSESSMENT OF U.S.-NORWEGIAN
RELATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 231853 (B) OSLO 3740

1. AS WE ARE AIMING AT COMPLETION OF OUR ANNUAL ASSESSMENT BEFORE THE LONDON MEETING, I HAVE NOT UNDERTAKEN A COMPLETE REVISION OF THE SUMMARY ASSESSMENT SUBMITTED IN OCTOBER (REFTEL B). THAT ASSESSMENT STILL HOLDS UP, THOUGH IT MIGHT BE UPDATED WITH THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:
2. DESPITE THE INHERENTLY UNSTABLE SITUATION LEFT BY ELECTIONS, PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI BY AND LARGE IGNORED PRESSURES FROM THE LEFT IN SELECTION OF HIS CABINET; OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO US, HE CHOSE FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS WHO ARE STAUNCHLY PRO-US AND PRO-NATO. SEVERAL MAMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST ELECTORAL LEAGUE (SV) HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN THEIR USE OF THE STORTING PODIUM FOR ATTACKS ON NORWEGIAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES, BUT SO FAR THE SV HAS NOT EXCELLED IN DISPLAYING EITHER UNITY OR EFFECTIVENESS; SOME OF THE WILDER CHARGES MADE BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS HAVE CLEARLY BACKFIRED.
3. WE SAW IN THE FUROR RAISED OVER THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD AN EXAMPLE OF THE READINESS OF THE FAR LEFT TO SEIZE ON ANY OPPOR-

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TUNITY FOR ATTACKING THE U.S. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE BRATTELI

GOVERNMENT IN THAT CASE WAS NOT REASSURING, ALTHOUGH IT WAS PERHAPS NOT A TRUE TEST OF THE WILLINGNESS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO CONFRONT THE LEFT ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE. THE NOBEL AWARD ISSUE WAS CLOUDED BY THE VERY REAL DANGER OF REOPENING THE VIETNAM DEBATE AND BY THE UNWILLINGNESS OF ANYONE IN NORWAY TO ARGUE IN SUPPORT OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE'S ATTEMPT TO PLAY SOLOMON IN DIVIDING THE AWARD. NONETHELESS, IT WAS DISAPPOINTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT MADE NO EFFORT TO CURB MOUNTING PUBLIC PROTEST AND IN EFFECT SHIFTED TO THE SECRETARY THE ONUS OF TERMINATING THE BUDDING CAMPAIGN OF ANTI-AMERICANISM.

4. THIS GOVERNMENT, LIKE MOST OF ITS PREDECESSORS IN RECENT YEARS, REMAINS CONVINCED THAT ATTACKS ON UNDEMOCRATIC TENDENCIES WITHIN NATO MEMBER STATES SERVE THE CAUSE OF STRENGTHENING NORWEGIAN POPULAR SUPPORT FOR NATO, AND IT AGAIN APPEARS INEVITABLE THAT THE NORWEGIANS WILL RAISE THE GREEK AND PORTUGUESE ISSUES AT THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL. IN OTHER RESPECTS, THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN A DETERMINATION TO PROTECT NORWAY'S TIES WITH NATO AND HAS REAFFIRMED THE ESSENTIALITY OF THESE TIES BOTH IN POLICY STATEMENTS AND IN STORTING DEBATE.

5. ALSO ENCOURAGING IS THE FACT THAT BRATTELI HAS THIS PAST WEEK WEATHERED THE FIRST STORM ON DEFENSE MATTERS BY GETTING NEXT YEAR'S DEFENSE BUDGET THROUGH THE STORTING VIRTUALLY UNSCATHED. BEFORE THE BUDGET DEBATE BEGAN, THE NEW GOVERNMENT ITSELF MADE A TOKEN REDUCTION IN THE DRAFT DEFENSE BUDGET IT HAD INHERITED FROM ITS PREDECESSOR, BUT IT THEN STOOD FIRM AGAINST THE RENEWED CALL OF THE FAR LEFT FOR A 25 PERCENT REDUCTION.

6. THE NORWEGIANS HAVE SO FAR BEEN ABLE TO RIDE OUT THE MIDDLE EAST STORM WITH LITTLE DANGER TO THEIR (OR OUR) INTERESTS. BECAUSE WE DID NOT ASK ANYTHING SPECIAL OF THEM IN CONNECTION WITH OUR RESUPPLY EFFORT FOR ISRAEL, THEY FACED NO CHOICES IN THAT REGARD AND THEREFORE WERE NOT A DIRECT OBJECT OF OUR CONCERN AT THE GENERAL LACK OF NATO SOLIDARITY. THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED THEIR TRADITIONAL NEUTRAL POSTURE TOWARD THE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, STILL HOPING TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES AS A PEACEMAKER OR PEACEKEEPER IF THE OCCASION ARISES. IN THIS CONNECTION GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE, DISAPPOINTED THAT THEIR OFFER OF TROOPS WAS NOT ACCEPTED

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BY THE UN, AND THEY REMAIN SOMEWHAT CONCERNED THAT ANTI-NATO ELEMENTS WILL CLAMOR THAT IT IS NATO MEMBERSHIP WHICH MAKES NORWAY INELIGIBLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO STRENGTHENING THE UN AS A PEACEKEEPER.

7. NORWAY IS IN A BETTER ENERGY POSITION THAN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, BEING ONLY 40 PERCENT DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED OIL. IT IS CORRESPONDINGLY LESS VULNERABLE TO ARAB PRESSURES AND NOT INCLINED TO MAKE THE U.S. THE SCAPEGOAT FOR DOMESTIC ECONOMIC

DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE OIL EMBARGO.

8. AS WE HAVE SEEN FROM THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS OF INTENSIVE LOBBYING ON UN MATTERS SUCH AS GUINEA-BISSAU, THE PRG, KHMER REPRESENTATION, AND KOREA, THE NORWEGIANS--WHETHER BECAUSE OF POPULAR PRESSURES, AS THEY SOMETIMES TELL US, OR OUT OF IDEOLOGICAL CONVICTION--SIMPLY DO NOT AGREE WITH US ON MANY CONTENTIOUS ISSUES IN THE THIRD WORLD. THIS IS GOING TO BE A CONTINUING SOURCE OF FRICTION IN OUR RELATIONS. THEY DO NOT, HOWEVER, SHOW SIGNS OF WAVERING ON THE ISSUES WHICH ARE OF EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE TO US. DEFENSE AND SECURITY COOPERATION, BILATERALLY AND WITHIN NATO, HAS IF ANYTHING BEEN ENHANCED AS THE AWARENESS OF BEING LEFT OUT OF THE EC AND THE US-EC DIALOGUE GROWS. NORWAY CONTINUES TO REALIZE THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED NATO APPROACH TO DETENTE-SEEKING, HAS PLAYED A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE ATLANTIC DIALOGUE, AND HAS AT LEAST EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR CALL FOR BURDEN SHARING.

9. A CONTINUING EFFORT TO KEEP THE LABOR GOVERNMENT TUNED IN TO OUR THINKING THROUGH FREQUENT CONSULTATIONS WILL BE OF GREAT VALUE FOR RETAINING NORWEGIAN COOPERATION ON THESE ISSUES OF TRANSCENDENT IMPORTANCE. RECEPTION OF FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK WAS ANOTHER STEP IN THAT DIRECTION AND WILL, I FEEL CERTAIN, HAVE LONG-RANGE SIGNIFICANCE FOR OUR RELATIONS.

BYRNE

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